01834

1968/01/05

January 5, 1968

Following are the highlights of this morning's meeting between Governor Harriman and the Romanian First Deputy Foreign Minister, Macovescu, lasting over two hours followed by lunch:

1. As a result of their conversations with Governor Harriman in Bucharest, President Ceausescu and Prime Minister Maurer sent Macovescu to Hanoi. Macovescu was in Hanoi for four days in mid-December and had a number of meetings with Vietnamese officials, including one long one with Prime Minister Pham Van Dong and two with Foreign Minister Trinh.

2. After extended discussion, Macovescu was told in writing with verbal explanations that:

(a) Hanoi will undertake talks with U.S. at any mutually agreeable place, after bombardment of North Vietnam has unconditionally ceased. However, no interval of time before meeting was specified. Demand for permanent cessation of bombardment was definitely dropped.

(b) At the talks Hanoi would put forward its four points and the NLF program as basis for settlement. However, Hanoi understands the United States to have a different position and is prepared to engage in serious discussions.

(c) There was no mention of the NLF being present at the talks, nor limitation of subjects to be covered.

In addition, Macovescu explained in detail to North Vietnamese the meaning of the assumption of "no advantage" to be taken of the cessation of bombardment -- namely, no increase in the flow of men and supplies to the South or attack across the DMZ. However, Hanoi characterized the "no advantage" formula as a condition and maintained an unwillingness to indicate its position. Macovescu clearly

understands

COPY LBJ LIBRARY

understands the adverse effect of a breakdown in negotiations if Hanoi were to take advantage of the cessation of bombardment and is certain he explained it fully to North Vietnamese.

Macovescu stopped in Peking on his return and reported to Chinese Foreign Office official Romanian and U.S. positions but not Hanoi's. At first, Chinese appeared to oppose negotiations but at end stated it was a question for Hanoi to decide.

Macovescu is under instructions from Ceausescu and Maurer to see the President before his return.

Harriman was impressed by Macovescu's meticulous care in clarity of his statements and answers to his questions in order to avoid any possible misunderstanding on our part of Hanoi's position. It seems clear that Trinh's statement of December 28 resulted from Macovescu's visit.

A fuller memcon is being prepared which the Secretary of State will bring with him on Sunday. In the meantime, he is seeing Macovescu at 11:00 Saturday morning.

W. Averell Harriman

Macovescu strongly urges that the fact of his presence in Washington be kept secret.

COPY LBJ LIBRARY

(phoned by Ben Read 7:25 p.m. 1/5/68)

32-2

(after the signature)

Macovescu strongly urges that the fact of his presence in Washington be kept secret.

COPY LBJ LIBRARY